

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

1. (Previously Presented) A method for controlling an illumination of a display screen in portable wireless communication device comprising:

illuminating the display screen;

determining at least one illumination time parameter corresponding to a message displayed on the display screen, wherein the at least one illumination time parameter is based on at least one of a length of the message, a number of lines of the display screen required to display the message, and a type of message to be displayed; and

maintaining the illumination of the display screen for a period of time that is based on the at least one illumination time parameter.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein maintaining the illumination of the display screen for a period of time comprises:

determining a time value based on the at least one illumination time parameter;

decrementing the time value to produce a remaining time value; and

terminating the illumination of the display screen when the remaining time value no longer exceeds zero.

3. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein determining at least one illumination time parameter comprises determining a plurality of illumination time parameters and wherein an illumination time parameter of the plurality of illumination time parameters comprises a time constant.

4. (Cancelled)

5. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

when the display screen is illuminated, receiving an instruction to terminate the illumination of the display screen; and

in response to receiving the instruction, terminating the illumination of the display screen prior to an expiration of the period of time.

6. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein illuminating a display screen comprises:

sensing a level of ambient light;

comparing the level of ambient light to an ambient light threshold;

when the level of ambient light is greater than the ambient light threshold, determining to not illuminate the display screen; and

wherein illuminating a display screen comprises illuminating a display screen when the level of ambient light is less than the ambient light threshold.

7. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein maintaining the illumination of the display screen comprises:

sensing a level of ambient light;

comparing the level of ambient light to an ambient light threshold; and

when the level of ambient light is greater than the ambient light threshold, terminating the illumination of the display screen prior to an expiration of the period of time.

8. (Previously Presented) An apparatus for controlling illumination of a display screen in portable wireless communication device comprising:

a light source for illuminating the display screen; and

a processor coupled to the light source that couples power to the light source to illuminate the display screen, determines at least one illumination time parameter corresponding to a message displayed on the display screen, wherein the at least one illumination time parameter is based on at least one of a length of the message, a number of lines of the display screen required to display the message, and a type of message to be displayed, and maintains a coupling of power to the light source for a period of time that is based on the at least one illumination time parameter.

9. (Original) The apparatus of claim 8, wherein the apparatus further comprises a timer coupled to the processor and wherein the processor maintains the illumination of the display screen for a period of time by determining a time value based on the at least one

illumination time parameter, wherein the time value corresponds to the period of time, setting the timer based on the time value, decrementing the timer to produce a remaining time value, and terminating the illumination of the display screen when the remaining time value no longer exceeds zero.

10. (Original) The apparatus of claim 8, wherein the at least one illumination time parameter comprises a plurality of illumination time parameters, wherein an illumination time parameter of the plurality of illumination time parameters comprises a time constant, and wherein the apparatus further comprises a memory device coupled to the processor that maintains the time constant.

11. (Cancelled)

12. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 8, wherein the processor, when the display screen is illuminated, further receives an instruction to terminate the illumination of the display screen and, in response to receiving the instruction, decouples power from the light source prior to an expiration of the period of time.

13. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 8, wherein the apparatus further comprises a light sensor coupled to the processor that senses a level of ambient light and conveys a signal corresponding to the sensed level of ambient light to the processor and wherein the processor further compares the level of ambient light to an ambient light threshold that is maintained in a memory device coupled to the processor, couples power to the light source to illuminate the a display screen when the level of ambient light is less than the ambient light threshold, and determines to not illuminate the display screen when the level of ambient light is greater than the ambient light threshold.

14. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 8, wherein the apparatus further comprises a light sensor coupled to the processor that senses a level of ambient light and conveys a signal corresponding to the sensed level of ambient light to the processor and wherein the processor further compares the level of ambient light to an ambient light

threshold that is maintained in a memory device coupled to the processor and, when the level of ambient light is greater than the ambient light threshold, terminates the illumination of the display screen prior to an expiration of the period of time.

15. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 8, further comprising the display screen.

16. (Cancelled)

17. (Cancelled)

18. (Cancelled)

19. (Previously Presented) An apparatus for controlling illumination of a display screen in a portable wireless communication device comprising:

a display screen;

a light source for illuminating the display screen;

a processor coupled to the light source that couples power to the light source to illuminate the display screen, wherein the coupling of power to the light source causes the light source to illuminate the display screen;

a light sensor coupled to the processor that senses a level of ambient light and conveys a signal corresponding to the sensed level of ambient light to the processor; and

wherein the processor further compares the level of ambient light to an ambient light threshold that is maintained in a memory device coupled to the processor, couples power to the light source to illuminate the display screen when the level of ambient light is less than the ambient light threshold, and determines to not illuminate the display screen when the level of ambient light is greater than the ambient light threshold.

20. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 19, wherein when the display screen is currently illuminated and the processor determines that the level of ambient light is

greater than the ambient light threshold, the processor terminates illumination of the display screen.